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DE RUEHGO #1519 2860941  
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FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5280  
INFO RUCNASE/ASEAN MEMBER COLLECTIVE  
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 1170  
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 9937  
RUEHKKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA 4362  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 1823  
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 3558  
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 0520  
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 7036  
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 4655  
RUEHCI/AMCONSUL CALCUTTA 0932  
RUEHCN/AMCONSUL CHENGDU 0936  
RUDKIA/AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI 0666  
RHHMUNA/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI  
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 2885  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0537  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC  
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS  
RUEKJCS/Joint STAFF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L RANGOON 001519

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STATE FOR EAP/MLS; PACOM FOR FPA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/11/2016

TAGS: PGOV PHUM PREL BM

SUBJECT: BURMA: MFA DEMARCHE CHARGE ON UNSC DISCUSSION

Classified By: CDA Shari Villarosa for Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (U) On October 10, Deputy Director General of the MFA's International Organizations Division, U Hla Myint, called in the Charge d'Affaires to deliver a lackluster protest against U.S. comments during the September 29 UNSC discussion on Burma. Noting that the Foreign Minister had instructed him to deliver his points, U Hla Myint said that during the Security Council discussion, U/SYG Gambari had stressed Burma's complicated history and acknowledged progress in Burma such as decreasing opium poppy production. Additionally, U Hla Myint said, Gambari had acknowledged the GOB's progress on labor issues, including the release of two prisoners who had protested against forced labor and the GOB's ongoing consultations with the ILO to negotiate a credible mechanism to address forced labor cases in Burma. U Hla Myint concluded by stating that Burma was disappointed with U.S. action in the Security Council and requested that the U.S. make an effort to acknowledge positive developments in any future Council discussion on Burma.

¶2. (SBU) The Charge responded that the U.S. recognizes progress when it sees it, and that while we had acknowledged decreased opium production in Burma, which the Foreign Minister cited in his speech to the U.N. last year, methamphetamine production in Burma has soared. She emphasized that the U.S. wants to see further, concrete progress on forced labor and political prisoners. The Charge pointed out that although the GOB had recently released two imprisoned labor activists, during the last two weeks the regime had detained five prominent pro-democracy activists: Min Ko Naing, Ko Ko Gyi, Htay Kywe, Pyone Cho, and Min Zeya. The Charge stressed that their detention contradicted the regime's claims of progress on democracy, and called for the immediate and unconditional release of the student prisoners, together with Aung San Suu Kyi, U Win Tin, and all remaining political prisoners.

¶3. (SBU) In addition, she noted there had been no progress at all on increasing access for humanitarian assistance organizations as requested by U/SYG Gambari last May. The international community needs to see concrete progress in all these areas. U Hla Myint nodded agreeably and did not challenge any of the Charge's points. Charge noted that the U.S. and the GOB share the same objective for Burma: a peaceful, stable society progressing into the future. The U.S. strongly believes that this can only happen with an inclusive political transition that brings widely respected leaders like Aung San Suu Kyi and Hkun Htun Oo into the dialogue.

¶4. (SBU) Comment: The Foreign Ministry's demarche coincided with the resumption of Burma's National Convention, which began with a series of repetitive, canned speeches denouncing the U.S. for raising Burma in the UN Security Council. U Hla Myint delivered his points unenthusiastically and passed the Charge a more detailed aide memoire that he clearly had not even read, since it claimed that there was no methamphetamine production in Burma. We continue to receive messages of gratitude and support for our efforts on Burma in the UNSC from members of the pro-democracy opposition, the public, and even many of the cease-fire groups participating in the Convention. End Summary.

VILLAROSA